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**SPRING FESTIVALS
IN IRAQ**

EDITORIAL

Iraq Will Never Tolerate Espionage

The Dutch Government has been attempting to instigate world public opinion against the Iraqi government for punishing a Zionist spy from a Dutch origin, Alexander Haroun, who worked as advisor to Mulla Mustafa Barzani.

The Dutch government and the Zionist information media have overlooked the fact that this spy was sentenced to death after being convicted of committing espionage and conspiratorial acts against the Republic of Iraq.

The Dutch Government should not have allowed itself to take part in this malicious campaign. But we are convinced that the deep connections between Amsterdam and the Zionist entity have induced the Dutch government to take this pro-Zionist stand.

On many previous occasions the Dutch government stood against the Arabs both in the United Nations and other international organisations. Its stance during the 1967 and 1973 wars was flagrantly biased in support of the Zionist usurpers.

If the Dutch government is trying to take its revenge on Iraq because of the nationalisation of the Iraqi Oil, in which Dutch oil companies used to have a share, we would remind it and the Dutch people that the act of nationalisation was an expression of Iraq's determination to liberate its wealth and natural resources from any form of foreign exploitation.

Let all know that the President of the Republic of Iraq, on behalf of the Revolutionary Leadership, has pledged to clear Iraq from all conspirators, spies and saboteurs. Iraq is a sovereign and independent state. The time when spies and conspirators could run freely in our country is over and anyone who will ever dare to do any harm to our people will be punished.

Death will be the punishment for all those who commit acts of espionage and sabotage regardless of nationality or colour. The voices crying in Holland and elsewhere should know that we will not retreat from this line in protecting our sovereignty and independence.



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STALACTITE FORMATIONS IN KONEPA
CAVE IN NORTH IRAQ



Joint meeting between Mr. Shibly al-Aysami and Dr. Bruno Kreisky

The Arab Nation Has a Great Impact on the Civilization of Europe

Austrian Chancellor's Visit to Iraq

Middle East developments and events have their effects and echoes throughout the world. Even the western world, which is occasionally misled by false Zionist propaganda, is no longer ready to hear the trumpets of that illusive, deceptive publicity of racist Zionism.

At the time when the friends of the Arabs are becoming more numerous day after day, the Zionists, following the exposition of their racist nature, have been losing grounds everywhere.

Missions on various levels and fields have been coming to the Middle East to investigate the facts on the spot.

Two weeks ago, when Baghdad was playing host to the emissaries of peace-loving forces and the World Peace Council and to the Afro-Asian intelligentsia a key West European figure, Dr. Bruno Kreisky, President of the Socialist Party, paid a visit to Iraq as the head of a delegation representing Western Europe Socialist International. The aim of his two-day mission to Iraq was "fact finding".

Dr. Kreisky and the delegation accompanying him were accorded warm welcome in Iraq. They were greeted at the airport by Mr. Shibly al-Aysami, Assistant Secretary-General of the Arab Baath Socialist Party and a number of senior party members and government officials. Mr. Shibly al-Aysami led the Iraqi delegation to the talks with the visiting Austrian Chancellor and the Socialist International's representatives.

In the course of their talks Mr. Aysami reaffirmed that the party's stance towards the current international issues is based on the firm outlook of the right of the Arab nation in Palestine, and that the party rejects any settlement of the issue which goes beyond this framework or on the basis of fait accompli as the situation is going on at present.

Comrade Aysami added that the present reality was and is still established on the basis of aggressions, the usurpation of the land of Palestine and displacing its native people. He stressed that the fait accompli was created in the Arab region

with the view to countering Arab revolution movement and unity and impeding the progress of the Arab nation.

Comrade Aysami gave an account of the uneasy events witnessed in the area since that announcement of Balfour Declaration. He confirmed that the capitulationist solutions being put forth on the Arab arena would not lead to any peace in the world because they ignore the roots of the issue of Palestine.

Dr. Kreisky and members of his delegation were very impressed by the open explanations on the leading Middle East issue of Palestine given by Comrade Aysami. Dr. Kreisky assured Comrade Aysami that he and his colleagues admit and support the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to determine their destiny and establish their own nation.

Speaking about the relations linking the Arabs with the Europeans, Dr. Kreisky described them as very old and "the Arab nation has great impact on the civilisation of Europe". He stressed the necessity of developing these relations in the interests of the Arab and European peoples. He paid tribute to Iraq's stands in international cooperation, especially in the field of oil, which he described as "firm and built on solid principled considerations".

In the course of his visit, Dr. Kreisky was received by Mr. Saddam Hussein, Deputy Secretary of the Regional Leadership of the Arab Baath Socialist Party and Vice-Chairman of the Revolution Command Council where the two sides had talks on the current Arab and international issues.

President Bakr Calls for Comprehensive Innovation in Education



Innovation is the ideal path for realising the strategic aims of higher education within the context of a continuous and comprehensive academic overall educational process in the universities. This was emphasised by President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr when he presided over a meeting of the Higher Education and Scientific Research Council.

President Bakr elaborated that Iraq, while undergoing extensive changes in all fields, was in need of applying new and advanced programmes in the field of education and that emphasis should be laid on the comprehensive outlook towards all higher education stages with full coordination among branches and departments. He pointed out that the drawing up of such program-

mes as well as their realisation should be associated with the basic principles of the Arab Baath Socialist Party and the July 17 Revolution for educating and preparing students capable of discharging their responsibilities towards their people and nation.

The President stressed on the necessity of giving due attention to research and study centres for the application of science in realising the prosperous society.

The council debated various obstacles and problems of higher education and means of overcoming them in addition to considering the proposals tabled regarding the plans set to expand graduate and post graduate studies.



IRAQ IS PART OF THE COMMUNITY OF PEOPLES STRUGGLING FOR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE

Baghdad Plays Host to Afro-Asian Writers

The struggle against imperialism, Zionism and racism is not confined to those brave fighters but also involves those courageous writers whose weapon is the pen. Asia and Africa, the two giant continents, have been the focus of imperialism and Zionist aggression. The intelligentsia, especially the writers, have played an effective role in liberating their countries from foreign colonialism in Asia and Africa and they still fight tirelessly to eliminate the remnants of the old and neo-colonialism.

On March 13, and on behalf of President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, Mr. Tariq Aziz, Minister of Information, opened the meetings of the Afro-Asian Writers Federation's Executive Committee, with an impressive speech which underlined Iraq's genuine desire to back all militant peoples struggling to gain their freedom and independence, and to achieve progress for their nations.

On that occasion too the Lotus prize of 1975 was awarded

to a number of prominent Afro-Asian writers and poets, including the great Arab poet Mohammed Mehdi al-Jawahiri, of Iraq.

Addressing the opening ceremony, Mr. Aziz conveyed to the participants greetings of President Bakr and his wishes for their gathering to gain every success. The President also sent his greetings to the writers and poets who had been awarded the Lotus prize for 1975.

Addressing himself to the audience Mr. Aziz said: "It is my privilege to open this festival held in Baghdad, the cradle of civilisation; it has coincided with an occasion very dear to us and to the writers and intellectuals of Asia and Africa, the occasion of awarding the 1975 Lotus prize to three distinguished writers in Asia and Africa and we are fortunate in that our country, Iraq, is the fatherland of one of them — our great poet Mohammed Mehdi al-Jawahiri".

Mr. Aziz reaffirmed that Iraq is an indivisible part of the great

Arab nation as well as part of the community of peoples struggling for freedom, independence and progress. He pointed out that Iraq assumed its great militant responsibility towards the fateful causes of the two continents and towards the struggling peoples of the globe as well as towards the issues of liberation, progress and peace. "Therefore" Mr. Aziz explained, "Iraq struggles on all levels and battlefields with a view to strengthening peoples' liberation movements and promoting the ability of such movements to realize their ends in freedom, progress and prosperity, and apart from this struggle Iraq has absolute support for the Afro-Asian intellectuals who fight against racial Zionism whose threats are not confined to the borders of the Arab nation".

The Conference stands as one of the prominent events that have taken place in March. It was attended by 50 delegations representing African, Asian and Latin American countries, Afro-



On behalf of President Bakr, Mr. Tariq Aziz addressed the meeting.

Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO), the Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists and a number of distinguished men of letters, in other parts of the world.

During the three-day meetings the participants discussed matters related to literature and culture in Asia and Africa and the role of men of letters in the current political development in the two continents.

The participants regarded their gathering in Baghdad as a "further step forward for intensifying the struggle of the Afro-Asian writers against imperialism, racism and Zionism, particularly following the successive victories achieved by the peo-

ples of south-east Asia and Africa against foreign presence.

In the context of their resolutions and recommendations, the participants greeted the victory of the Angolan people, and called upon all peace-loving forces to support and back this young African nation. They also greeted the Palestinian writers and poets who sacrificed their lives to rid their homeland of the Zionist occupation and recommended that their writings should be compiled and published in Asia and Africa in recognition of their achievements. The participants further stressed the necessity of consolidating the bonds of cooperation between the African and Asian

writers and the AAPSO as well as with the World Peace Council and the world democratic organisation. They condemned the inhuman repressive measures perpetrated by the forces of the Zionist entity in the occupied land against the Arab people of Palestine and hailed the struggle which the Palestinian people are waging for restoring their fatherland.

They also condemned the repressive and genocidal acts practised by the Ethiopian authorities against the people of Eritrea who struggle for liberation and independence of their fatherland.

WORLD PEACE MOVEMENT SUPPORTS ARAB STRUGGLE



World Peace Council Lauds Iraq's Experiment

The Preparatory Committee for Baghdad's Third International Seminar on "Problems of Development and the Struggle for a New World Economic Order", which is due to convene on June 1, 1976, in co-operation with the World Peace Council and the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation, held its meetings in Baghdad on March 15.

Addressing the Committee, Mr. Aziz Sherif, Secretary-General of the National Council for Peace and Solidarity, reviewed Iraq's role in developing its own economy after putting an end to foreign monopolies operating in the country by nationalising the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) in 1972.

Mr. Sherif pointed out Iraq's initiative in using oil as a

weapon in the struggle against imperialism and zionism during the 1973 war, and the nationalisation decision in 1975 which completely liberated the country's oil resources from foreign domination.

"Our country", Mr. Sherif said, "contributes to the process of intensifying the great struggle waged by the peoples of the

developing countries for the liquidation of the remaining imperialist exploitation and domination over the natural resources of the Third World countries to proceed on developing and deepening social and economic transformations as well as uplifting the living standards of the people.

"The experiment of the Third World countries and their co-operation with the socialist countries is of vital significance to foil imperialist schemings, preserve political independence, achieve economic liberation, eliminate backwardness, and to proceed along the path of economic build-up", he added.

In a statement following the conclusion of its two-day meetings, the Committee called on the developing countries to consolidate cooperation to realise economic integration.

It stressed that the struggle for development was closely associated with the struggle for world peace, disarmament and the establishment of equal international relations.

The statement urged all international and regional bodies and organisations to contribute to the success of Baghdad Seminar and to actively participate in serving the interests of all peoples of the world.

In addition to members of the Iraq preparatory committee, the meetings were attended by representatives of the World Peace Council, the Soviet Solidarity Committee, and the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation.

Speaking on Iraq's stand and the constant backing extended by President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr to the world peace movement, Mr. Ramesh Chandra, Secretary General of the World Peace Council said in a press

conference which he held in Baghdad, that the lessons given by the Iraqi experiments, which were embodied by conferring on Iraq the medal of Joëlio Curi, were embodied by conferring on line followed by the leadership and people of Iraq in realising autonomy for the Kurdish masses and consolidating the National Front.

Mr. Chandra stressed that the World Peace Council had always been supporting the struggle of the Palestinian Arab people and their just right to return to their home, as well as the struggle of the Arab people in the Arab Gulf for liberation and independence. He said that the Council Presidium would hold a meeting in New Delhi, India, on April 15, dedicated to supporting the struggle of the Arab people in Oman and Palestine as well as to condemn world zionism.

Mr. Rowell Shols, member of the GDR Peace Council and Chairman of the Arab Friendship Society, reiterated his

country's solidarity with the struggle of the Arab people against imperialism and zionism.

Fr. Yourdanis, member of the Greek Parliament and Chairman of the Peace Council in Greece, said that every peace-loving person looks forward to the unity of the Arab nation, as such would resolve all problems of this nation.

In a joint Communique issued following the visit of the World Peace Council delegation to Iraq, the Council affirmed its solidarity with Iraq in its initiatives taken towards consolidating action for the establishment of peace, freedom, justice and social progress. The Council stressed its support to the forthcoming non-aligned conference and its work for the attainment of peace and security in Asia, Afro-Asian solidarity and support to the people of Palestine in their struggle against the Zionist-imperialist alliance.

Arab National Peace Committees Discuss Liberation Issues

The follow-up Committee of the peace and solidarity committees in the Arab countries held an ordinary meeting in Baghdad on March 15. Over a period of two days the committee discussed issues concerning Arab liberation movement, particularly the confrontation against zionism and imperialism, as well as the struggle in the Arab Gulf area.

The committee, which was formed by the conference of the Arab Peace and Solidarity Organisations held in Beirut, Lebanon, last year, was attended by representatives of peace committees in Iraq, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Lebanon.



The Second International Festival of Palestine Films and TV Programmes



Mr. Ali Ghennam addressing the opening ceremony of the festival

Comrade Ali Ghennam, member of the National Leadership of the Arab Baath Socialist Party opened, on March 20, the Second International Festival of Palestine Films and TV programmes at al-Shaab Hall. The Festival was held under the slogan: "THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE IS THE CORNERSTONE OF WORLD PEACE".

Thirty Arab and friendly countries participated in this Festival together with many

liberation movements and semi-official institutions and organisations dealing with cinema and TV programmes.

This five-day Festival was sponsored by the Arab Radio Stations Federation in cooperation with the Arab League, the Palestine Liberation Movement and the Iraqi General Establishment for Radio and TV.

A Secretariat-General was formed under the Chairmanship of Mr. Latif al-Dulaimi, Director

General of the General Establishment for Radio and TV and the membership of the specialised personnel in the field of Cinema and TV Films in addition to a jury panel for films entered in the competition.

This Second International Festival of Palestine Films and TV Programmes is a step towards unifying the Arab efforts to struggle against imperialism, Zionism and local reactionaries.

The Second Arab Conference on Countryside Electrification



Mr. Taha Jazrawi speaking in the Conference

ID. 76 Million For Electrification of Countryside

Electric power is the major element of every day life. It is a factor of civilization and progress and an inevitable need for the operation of machinery in farms, workshops, mills and industrial projects. Its significance may be more in clinics, homes, schools and roads. To develop a countryside you have to depend on electricity.

The question of supplying the whole Iraqi countryside with power at a minimum cost and shorter time has been one of the many objectives aspired to by the 17th July Revolution since assuming power in 1968. The revolution has inherited a bitter legacy from the past regimes, but together with the Arab Baath Socialist Party, rapid strides in the field of providing power to the rural areas have been undertaken by the revolution.

The foregoing was part of the explanations outlined by Mr. Taha Jazrawi, RCC member, Minister of Industry and Miner-

als, when he opened on March 16 the second Arab Conference on Electrification of the Countryside.

Mr. Jazrawi reaffirmed that the current five-year plan has earmarked ID 76 million (260 million US dollars) for the electrification of the rural areas in Iraq. He pointed out that the coming years would witness an increased effort in executing the most important projects, so as to provide the inhabitants of the rural areas with electric power.

Mr. Jazrawi added that imperialism had controlled raw materials so as to keep the peoples of the under-developed world backward and poor.

On the pan-Arab level, Mr. Jazrawi pointed out that "coordination of efforts in the field of electric power did not form urgent need; it is in fact the least that our plans of action in this conference should tackle, for we aim at a solid and active Arab

cooperation in all spheres of development planning including exchange of expertise, joint ventures, preparation of qualified and technical personnel and the spreading of electric power throughout the whole Arab nation".

Conclusions:

The four-day conference ended its work with a number of recommendations among which was tapping of Arab rich potentials for speeding up the electrification of the Arab countryside. It also stressed the importance of concerting Arab plans for the development of the rural areas economically and socially.

The conference was attended by representatives from Algeria, Sudan, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Tunisia, Bahrain and Jordan as well as the Arab Engineers Federation, the Arab Industrial Centre and Experts from Poland, Hungary and Finland.

The Racialism of Zionism and the Humanitarianism of Arab Nationalism

by Dr. Elias Farah
(Member of the National Leadership
of the Arab Baath Socialist Party)

Part Five

Those who believe in Jewish nationalism are only part of the Jews. This part imagines Jewish nationalism as an ethnic entity, i.e. a constitutional factor to which a historical factor has been added to make a unique national model of mental and physical powers, as Aaron Gordon says. Others think that the Jewish religion is the first justification for the birth of Jewish nationalism. Yet others view that the Jewish question is not a social or a religious one but a nationalist question, as Herzl said. The Jews in his opinion are "a distinct community with a feeling of solidarity which is connected and unified by their predicament" while Ahad'ham says, "Our religion is nationalism". Burshov, on the other hand, sees that "the nationalist question for a persecuted people is removed from the conditions of production".

Samuel Landau considers "The Torah and Work" are two forms of one essence: rebirth". While Martin Buber says "Israel is not a nation like any other nation and was not a nation even when its representatives were hoping that it would be one during certain periods of history.

"It is a people, but unlike other peoples in that it is the only people which was from the beginning of its history a nation and a religious society at the same time." Others, like the French Jewish poet Edmond Flegel and the Zionist American leader Louis Brandeis and the two American Rabbis, Kepelman and Silver... all of them lose their way while trying to discover an ideological basis with which they can convince themselves that they are a nationality, while at the same time

they depend on the persecution complex, diaspora, wandering, the religious foundation and the mythical nostalgia for the promised land.

He who reads what those say really feels that he is dealing with persons living in the atmosphere of myth, removed from the world and the present age as well as the common language and concept of known ideologies, so much so that he imagines himself in the tower of BABEL where nothing binds those who babble their different languages except the silence.

But the Zionists in the tower of their myth are joined together by the gangster spirit and adventure and the colonialist racist reactionary expansionist neo-fascism.

This neo-fascism illustrated by Zionism has roots in history farther than the old fascism.

It is also more fanatic and of narrower horizon.

Its alliance with imperialism is stronger and planned on a wider scale.

In it there is more complexity and greater evil.

The Arab nation is waging a battle of life and death with Zionism and imperialism as they are the two obnoxious phenomena of our contemporary world.

What is the nature of ideology that guides the Arab liberation movement? What are the characteristics of this movement? And could the defects and maladies of Zionism and imperialism seep into it?

It is sufficient to refer, at the outset, to the announcement of the American President on 15 May 1948 which was the first declaration of the recognition of "Israel", "Israel rose in the Middle East in order to combat the nationalist current, and if it could not realize this, it could at last drive it away from the oil American interests".

Thus, without any effort to hide the intent, the imperialist-Zionist alliance defines its position vis-a-vis the Arab liberation movement as a constant foe to the Arab renaissance; for the oil interests have put it in this position. The nature and aims of this renaissance have in turn uncovered its enemies.

Whereas Zionism is racist in nature, springing from ethnic and religious fanaticism, with persecution complex and aggressiveness as its marks, and while it depends on the exploitation of the situation of Jews for realising a colonising project which is organically attached to imperialism, and while the artificial Zionist entity has no vital and real function and practical aim beyond joining imperialism in sabotaging the Arab renaissance, Arab nationalism stands at the polar opposite of Zionism. It is a genuine and natural renaissance, emanating from the reality of the masses and their aspiration to change this reality in a way commensurate with the nature of this stage and the spirit of the age.

Arab nationalism is a liberation movement as well as a movement of nationalist and social struggle. It derives its value from its cultural heritage and from its scientific and revolutionary understanding of the Arab reality together with its awareness of the present world and the trends of its progress.

There is nothing in Arab nationalism like the fanaticism of Zionism nor its exclusiveness, artificiality, retrogression, isolationism or aggressiveness. Nothing could ever connect the Arab renaissance, which is part of the revolution in the world, the revolution of the toiling peoples and continents, with Zionism. Arab nationalism

is within the scope of the movement of history and is an original part of it and its cultural progressive and humanitarian character, while Zionism is among the powers which stand against the general movement of mankind.

For these reasons, the Arab nationalist movement has spontaneously met currents of progress throughout the post-war world, alike on the political, social, economic and cultural level. For these reasons, the crystallisation of the revolutionary Arab ideology was achieved through the general historical pattern, i.e. within the framework of the emerging revolutionary ideologies in the third world. In other words, it moves within this trend as it looks at man and his culture in a revolutionary, scientific and humanitarian perspective.

Zionism has remained all along the deviation from the norm even with regard to the Jews themselves who have rejected the Zionist idea.

Arab nationalism opposes colonialism and imperialism. It struggles for the abolition of the imperialist system. It stands in opposition to capitalism and the exploiting classes, since it is a movement of toiling and struggling masses. Its concept of the nation is bound up with struggle, work and production. It has not fabricated the link between nationalism and socialism as the bourgeois class in the industrialised West which exploited nationalism as a weapon for guarding its interests in the face of the socialism of the working class and its internationalism. That nationalism is very far from the real sense of nationalism and the unifying force in backwards societies which were subjected to imperialist domination, dismemberment and class exploitation. It is nearer to the imperialist interests while the working class as well as the other toiling classes in general are the ones which express the reality of the nation and its fighting spirit. Its interests and aims are in line with the objectives of unity, liberty and socialism.

This new historical pattern has determined the identification of nationalism with socialism.

Zionism is an imperialist movement attached, since its inception, to imperialism. Its fate is dependent on it. It is a reactionary movement the interests of which coincide with the powers and classes connected to imperialism. It is the enemy of progress and socialism.

HUGE OIL PROJECTS

Since the inception of July 17 Revolution of 1968, Iraq proceeded to adopt a scientific progressive oil policy. It achieved the direct national exploitation of oil resources, nationalised foreign oil companies operating in the country, put oil revenue in the service of national development, constructed a number of refineries and doubled their capacities, built a tanker fleet for the transport of oil by-products, and began the exploitation of natural gas by establishing a petro-chemical industry.

Crude oil production in 1974 amounted to 95.5 million metric tons of which 89.6 million tons were exported. This figure does not include the production of the Iraq National Oil Company (INOC) whose production of oil from the North Rumailah oil field topped 1 million tons in April 1974.

National oil production began with the production of the first stage of the North Rumailah project in April 1972 at an annual capacity of 5 million tons. After the completion of the third stage of the project on July 17, 1975 national oil production reached 42 million tons annually in addition to INOC's production from "Nahrani Omar" oilfield in Basrah where production began at 2-million-ton capacity annually. As to natural gas, production amounted to 328,964 million cubic feet in 1974.

Among the huge oil projects which were completed in 1975 is the \$340 million Bakr deep-water terminal on the Arab Gulf which will receive giant tankers of over 350,000 tonnage. The annual export capacity of the terminal is 120 million metric tons.

The \$255 million oil strategic pipeline which connected the northern oilfields to the southern ones is another economic feat as it will ensure the flow of Iraqi oil to world markets under all circumstances. The pipeline will be used to pump northern oil to Bakr terminal at an annual

capacity of 50 million tons; similarly, southern oil will be pumped to the Mediterranean ports across Syria and Lebanon at an annual capacity of 44 million tons.

Another important project which is in the offing is the \$68 million pipeline that will transport oil by-products between Baghdad and Basrah by connecting the refineries of both. This project aims at facilitating the distribution of oil products in the areas through which the pipeline passes. The annual capacity of the pipeline will be 1.5 million tons.

Oil Marketing

To own oil and to supply it to the consumer and avoid the arbitrary practices of oil-shipping companies and the possibility of oil tankers shortage in time of need for marketing, an oil producing country should have its own fleet of oil tankers. Iraq has realised the true dimensions of this reality and the absolute significance of setting up an Iraqi fleet of oil tankers.

The first step was taken in 1970, when the Iraq National Oil Company (INOC) signed a contract with a Spanish shipbuilding firm for the construction of seven oil tankers at a total cost of \$83 million and individual loading capacity of 35,370 tons of crude oil.

The first tanker "Rumaila" was received by Iraq on February 15, 1972; "Kirkuk" was received on July 20 of the same year. On the 29th of the same month the tanker "Ain Zala" was launched. The tanker "Khanaqin" was received on January 30, 1973. The fifth and sixth tankers, "Jambour" and "Baba Gurgur", were received in April and July 1973 respectively.

It is worth mentioning that when the Iraqi Tankers Company was established on April 11, 1972, it was granted a number of concessions to



One of the Iraqi oil tanker fleet

assist it in carrying out its activities in the best and fastest possible manner.

Apart from the abovementioned seven oil tankers, a contract was signed on February 21, 1974 with Sweden for the construction of four tankers with an individual loading capacity of 154,000 tons to be delivered during 1976 and 1977.

In addition, Iraq signed a contract on February 28, 1974 with a Japanese shipbuilding firm for the construction of an oil tanker with a capacity of 144,000 tons to be delivered in 1976. Another contract was signed with Japan on March 5, 1974 for the latter to supply Iraq with four oil tankers with a total capacity of 500,000 tons.

By 1977, Iraq will possess a fleet of 16 tankers with a total tonnage capacity of over 1.5 million tons of crude oil. Still, it is contemplating the necessity of ordering giant oil tankers to

realise an increase in transport capacity due to the increase in oil demand all over the world.

Iraq has realised that among the other advantages of developing one's own oil transport facilities is envisaged in the context of providing the required elasticity for crude oil marketing, and freeing this essential activity from the hands of international cartels.

The Organisation for Distributing Oil Products currently possesses three tankers. These include "Al-Ta'mim" (Nationalisation) the cargo of which is 12,000 tons, "Al-Rissala" (The Message) with a cargo of 5,000 tons and "Al-Khalida" (Immortal) the cargo of which is 7,000 tons. A fourth tanker will be received from Japan in the near future with a cargo of 9,000 tons. In addition to these, there are four small ships for carrying oil products, each with a capacity of 1,500 tons; there are two other ships that will arrive shortly. These will increase the capacity of the Iraqi fleet to 39,000 tons.

FEATURES



Geography lesson



FREE EDUCATION FOR ALL

The educational planning policy of the Republic of Iraq aims at reorganising and activating the teaching process at all academic stages on advanced scientific bases and national development interests.

The free education decision and the abolishment of private education which were implemented two years ago could well be considered a turning point in the history of educational system in Iraq, because

the two decisions have achieved, and for the first time, a unified system of education which will facilitate the process of drawing up complementary educational plans.

The State supports vocational education in order to prepare technical cadres required by the forthcoming development plans. The State treasury shoulders all the financial commitments required on the part of the student throughout the

stages of his study. Moreover, and for the first time in the contemporary history of Iraq, the national minorities enjoy their cultural rights; Kurdish language is taught in schools where Kurdish students constitute a majority; Turkish language in Turkoman schools, and Syriac in schools of the Syriac-speaking communities.

According to the statistics released by the Ministry of Education, there has been an in-

crease in the number of kindergartens: the 1974-1975 figure stands at 207 compared to 149 in 1973-74 and the number of children attending has risen from 19874 to 36442.

the number of students in vocational schools (industrial, agricultural, commercial and domestic arts) has risen to 20,830 in 1974-1975. Of course the increase in the number of stud-

The State exerts great efforts in illiteracy eradication in the country. It has given special attention to anti-illiteracy projects and campaigns. These efforts have led to the establishment of



Playing and chatting after lessons

Special care is given to primary education as it constitutes the cornerstone of all education stages.

Consequently the number of primary schools increased noticeably to 6831 in 1974-1975 and the number of attending students reached 1,521,136. Plans are now being drawn up to attain the target of two million primary students by 1980.

Work is underway to promote intermediate and secondary education academically. The number of students at both stages has increased to 449,655 in 1974-75 compared to 288,624 students in 1973-1974, whereas

ents in all academic stages has witnessed a similar increase in the number of teachers and an expansion in the building of new schools and institutes throughout the country.

Furthermore, higher education has been receiving utmost attention on the part of the State where statistics indicate a 13% increase in the number of students admitted to Iraqi universities in 1974-1975. The total number of students enrolled in Iraq's five universities amounted to 18,239; this figure showed an upward trend after the initiation of the Baghdad University of Technology

hundreds of anti-illiteracy centres throughout the country attended by some 150,000 attendees by February 1975. Plans drawn up by the government envisage the eradication of illiteracy among males by 1985 and among females by 1990.

Education and scientific research have received a considerable share of the previous and present State budgets. While the 1974-1975 budget allocated \$453.2 million for this sector the 1975 (which is a nine-month budget) allocated \$386.2 million. This is a clear indication of the State's concern and encouragement in the field of education for all and at all stages.

NEWS IN PICTURES



Mr. Saddam Hussein, ECC Vice-Chairman, received on March 15, 1976 General Grigaut, Chief of Staff of the French Air Force during his visit to Iraq.



Mr. Tareq Aziz, Minister of Information received on March 28, 1976 Mr. Gilbert Bischoff, Member of the Federal Parliament of Switzerland, member of the presidium of the Politburo of the Swiss Socialist Party, and the delegation accompanying him during their visit to Iraq.



Mr. Taha Muhiyuddin Ma'arouf, Vice President, returned to Iraq on March 27, 1976 after paying visit to Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Malagasy. During his visit Mr. Ma'arouf delivered messages from President Bakr to the Heads of States he visited.



Mr. Sa'adoun Hammadi, Foreign Minister, received on March 27 1976, Mr. Mohammed Saleh Mutte'e Foreign Minister of the Yemen Democratic Republic.

FEATURES

STATE FARMS : Nucleus of Socialist Countryside

Within the context of effecting the socialist transformation in the countryside and achieving the required agricultural development, Iraq has established state farms, using

of the national development plan. It is working on introducing modern scientific and technological methods in production, personnel training, marketing and social services.

The state owns a further two million donums which have been leased out to farmers collectively. Private and other forms of land ownership hold 8.4 million donums.



Students participate in digging channels in a state farm



Modern agriculture

socialist guidelines in administration and production and in raising the social, economic and cultural standards in the Iraqi countryside. Hence, the State Farms Administration act No. 141 of 1975 was promulgated on September 10, 1975.

Proceeding along the directives of the Arab Baath Socialist Party in the agricultural sector, the Administration has drawn up its work programme in accordance with the general framework

The Administration's task is multi-sided: Providing improved seeds, fodder, fertilizers and machinery. It aims at increasing the agricultural area allotted to it, which stands at present at 390,000 donums (one donum = 2500 sq. m.) by 8% annually. It is worth mentioning that arable land in Iraq amounts to 23 million donums of which 64,000 donums are occupied by collective farms and eleven million donums by cooperatives.

Iraq has made tangible progress in establishing cooperatives, collective and state farms. During the last five years Iraq succeeded in preparing the countryside, where 40% of the population live, for socialism. In the coming five years, the development of state farms first, then the collectives and finally cooperative farms will lead agricultural production in the country. This is the target of the State Farms Administration.

REPORT

The Phosphate Mines in Akkashat

A huge phosphate complex, the first of its kind in the Middle East, whose minimum volume of investment amounts to \$1000 million, is currently underway in Iraq. Multi-national companies and experts and ultra-modern equipment are now racing with time in turning the barren western desert into a noisy workshop which is utilising every minute for the extraction of phosphates, a raw material which will soon become an important factor in Iraq's national economy.

The site of the "workshop" is called Akkashat, some 150 km from Qaim town near the Syrian border. Thousands of cubic metres of gravel and sand are being poured in huge machinery which are used in the construction of roads and skeletons of the phosphate factory, industries and other civic installations. A gravel factory, exclusive for the phosphate com-

plex, is under construction since January 5, 1976, and is due to be completed at the end of the current year. This factory will provide 250 cu.m of gravel and sand per hour for the construction of the complex.

Of the other complementary works is the \$51 million water project which consists of a pumping station on the Euphrates river, the capacity of which is 170,000 cu.m per day; and a water purification system, in addition to a pipe-network for the supply of water to the residential areas belonging to the chemical complex in Qaim. This project will also pump 20,000 cu.m of water per day through a 20 inch diameter 150 km long pipe to the mines site; i.e. the distance from the Euphrates to the mines at Akkashat.

According to the surveys and explorations conducted in the area, it was discovered that huge reserves of phosphates lie

underneath the surface of the western desert.

The \$95 million phosphate mines, which will be connected by railway with Qaim and then to the main railway connecting Baghdad with the Syrian border, will have an annual capacity of 3.5 million tons of phosphate ore.

In Qaim, a huge chemical industry will be initiated. The factory there will produce annually 1.5 million tons of concentrated phosphate ores, 1.5 million tons of sulphuric acid, 400,000 tons of phosphoric acid, one million tons of phosphate fertilizers and 40,000 tons of cleansers. Such an industry will turn town of Qaim into a busy industrial city.

The whole project includes also the building of 250-house town in Ubaidi area and 750-house town in Akkashat together with the required public services, schools, clubs and hospitals.

Iraqi Aid to the Lebanese People Met with Gratitude

Ever since the fighting erupted in Lebanon, the Iraqi Government swiftly arranged to help the Lebanese people overcome this painful fighting by sending various kinds of aid including more than \$ 200,000 worth of medicines and several hundred truck-loads of dates, grain and flour that were distributed by popular committees all over Lebanon, in addition to airborne supplies that were sent in the early months of the struggle comprising more than 50-planes load.

These Iraqi supplies were met with gratitude from the various sectors of the National Movement and popular organisations because they disruption of ordinary life caused by the acts of helped relieve the Lebanese masses from the violence. The aid was sent by the leadership of the Arab Baath Socialist Party in Baghdad as a token of National Arab responsibility.

Likewise, the Iraqi leadership sent financial assistance to Lebanese Orphanages, Moslem and Christian alike, as a token of rejecting the wicked plans for the partition of Lebanon. Other sums of money were sent to country schools and to the Lebanese and Palestinian labour unions as an assistance for workers who lost their jobs and livelihood because of the fighting.

An Iraqi labour delegation headed by Mr. Bedan Fadhi, Secretary of the General Federation of Iraqi Workers, and Rasim Awadi Secretary of Foreign Relations in the Federation, brought the assistance to LL. 200,000 and met union leaders of Lebanon and Palestine assuring the need to strengthen labour struggle relations that unite the Arab working class into common goals and common fate in facing the common enemy.

The Great Uprising in Occupied Palestine

The uprising in the West Bank shows no sign of abating. There are demonstrations in practically every town and village and the people have clearly indicated their full support for the resistance movement. The Zionists, so adept in the past at fooling world opinion about their policy of occupation, today find themselves in the dock. They can no longer pretend that opposition to their presence in the West Bank and elsewhere is confined to a few school children. Press coverage has given the lie to this assumption and there

is no longer any room left for manipulating the representatives in the occupied territories of the world press.

Clearly, the Zionist entity is today under great pressure from within. The economic situation is stifling, and there are precious few Jews prepared now to settle in an embattled "state" that faces disaster. Not even war, which so often saved the Zionists in the past, will save them now. Consequ-

After the Great Uprising : Zionist Take-Over of Arab Owned Land in Occupied Palestine

The Zionist government overrode the protests of the Palestinian Arabs living under occupation since 1948, and decided to take thousands of acres of land historically owned by the Palestinians. Plans approved by the Zionist government are intended to take over 1500 acres of Arab-owned land in northern Galilee near the Lebanese borders for Zionist housing development.

In southern Galilee the enemy government planned to take over 1000 acres for an army training zone, and Arab farmers in the neighborhood are forced to co-ordinate with the army for cultivating what remained of their land.

To be sequestered also another 375,000 acres of desert land in the Negev region owned by Arab citizens. Tracts of land which Zionist authorities plan to confiscate also in central Occupied Palestine near Pith-Tikva.

The confiscation plans set up by the enemy have evoked protests from Arab owners who set up a committee for the defense of Arab land.

It is to be noted that the Zionist authorities in Palestine confiscated since 1948 around 800,000 acres of Arab land leaving 200,000 acres

for all the Arabs under occupation of which only 750,000 are arable land.

Observers regard these plans of confiscation as a sign of security deterioration in the occupied areas after the great uprising against the racist Zionist rule.

They say, the purpose is of two folds, to establish military and para-military Zionist settlements near the Lebanese borders to prevent Arab commando raids, and to put the Arabs inside Palestine under direct military observation after the growth of nationalist tendencies of rejecting the Zionist rule.

On the other hand, the great uprising of the West Bank entered its seventh week despite enemy terror and repression. Currently there is a movement to organize a general strike and a wide demonstration in protest against confiscation of Arab land and against allowing the Jews to pray in Islamic Holy places.

In the UN a delegation representing countries, members in the International Organization, met Dr. Kurt Waldheim the Secretary General to protest against the racist Zionist intervention in Islamic worship places in Jerusalem and other West Bank cities.

uently, the Zionist paranoia can find no outlet left other than venting its rage on the Palestinian people.

More and more men and women are falling under the truncheons of neurotic soldiers and policemen bent on crushing the population. The towns and villages are under a constant state of siege and there is an around-the-clock curfew designed to compel the people, through hunger and privation, to succumb to Zionist brute force. Only a few days ago, an eleven year old boy was shot dead and stringent measures were taken by the Zionists to prevent his funeral turning into a demonstration of protest and condemnation.

In "Hebron", the movement of protest is particularly strong and the mayor had to submit his resignation after his offices had been broken into

by the Zionists. All officials at the townhall had been arrested and the mayor of "Hebron" became the sixth West Bank mayor to tender his resignation. In Nablus, the situation is no better and the town has been hermetically sealed by the Zionist forces. There is also a curfew in the town of Ramallah and Bira.

All this has left its mark on the internal scene of the Zionist entity. General Arik Sharon, a super hawk, has resigned his post as special advisor to Rabin, after declaring on television that the Zionist entity was, militarily and politically, going through a dangerous phase. In the place of the outgoing general, there is an old woman making a political comeback: Golda Meir is bustling around as if she could save the tottering Zionist entity from total collapse. But the uprising goes on in the occupied territories.

US AID BACKBONE OF ZIONIST FINANCES

The budget announced by the racist Zionist government in occupied Palestine amounting to \$ 11.5 billion relies heavily on massive help from world Zionism and the U.S. government. This budget appropriates 41 per cent for defence but provides for only minimal economic growth for the coming year beginning April 1.

The Zionist Finance Minister said that "Israel" would have to spend an additional \$ 800 million to finance the manufacture of weapons and pay for previous arms purchases abroad.

As a result of the chronic deficit the standard of living will drop by 2.2 per cent this year, and the "Israelis" will maintain their record as the highest taxed in the world, with taxes financing 62 per cent of the public revenue, 5 per cent more than last year, according to the minister himself.

On the other hand, the Palestinian Studies Centre published a paper on the growing military

co-operation between the US and the Zionist entity which it said might be viewed on three levels: the relations between the two ministries of Defense; the Congressional backing of military aid programmes of the Zionist entity and arms deals concluded between the US and the racist "Israel".

Regarding the first point the new American Secretary of Defense Mr. Ramsfield assured "Israel" that there will be no obstacles in the way of providing her with the promised equipment. Secondly, the Congress assured that military aid to "Israel" will in no case be less than \$ 1.5 billion with a recommendation that half this money to be considered as a grant. Thirdly, enemy papers said that ground 'Lance' missiles were sent to "Israel" with hints that the number of these missiles will add up to 100, in addition to some aircraft of different types including "F-16" fighters to be delivered in the early eighties.

FACTS ABOUT PALESTINE

Zionists Blow up Arab Houses

Zionist occupation forces have started wide-range mass-murder operations by means of blowing up civilian houses belonging to Arabs in Nablus, Tol Karam, Henan, Upper Galili and Mesala in the occupied West Bank, Press reports from Occupied Palestine said.

The Zionist authorities are also reported to have confiscated 20 thousand donums for the purpose of establishing settlements there. The confiscation resulted into the transference of a large number of Arab peasants from their lands to Zionist army camps.

The reports added that in most streets connecting towns and villages of the occupied West Bank Zionist check points have been set up. Helicopters were patrolling during the night to

check the unpaved roads linking villages, by using flash bombs.

The reason for such terrorist procedures is said to be peaceful demonstrations!



It was not enough to take the son, Zionists also took the mother

Jewish Anti-Zionist Movement

Alfred Liliental, a Jewish writer, announced in a press report published in Bahrain by the weekly "Mawakef", that in occupied Palestine an anti-Zionist movement headed by a Rabbi considers the establishment of the so-called "Israel" a blasphemy according to the Old Testament and a violation of the Jewish religion.

Mr. Liliental added, that on his departure to the UN to support the late decision branding

zionism as a form of racism, he was prevented by Zionist authorities.

The writer is reported to be preparing at the time being a book explaining the nature of racist zionism and the difference between that forged movement and Judaism.

It is worth mentioning that Mr. Liliental was on a visit to Bahrain since the beginning of March on a tour in the Arab Gulf Area.

Exiled Palestinians on a Voyage

The daily "Public Opinion", of Kuwait, said that the Palestinian Arabs who had been exiled from their country by Zionist authorities a few months ago are intending to gather on a ship to the destination of occupied Palestine. The Palestinian citizens are going to get off the ship,

as they arrive there, and peacefully demand their return to their homes.

The paper added, that this step is an adequate proof to show world public opinion that the so-called Zionist claim of respecting human rights is totally false and unfounded.

Additional Military Supplies

The subordinate committee attached to the Appropriation Committee in the American Congress agreed on March 16th, to grant the Zionist entity additional military aids amounting to \$375 million for the next few months, announced the Zionist radio.

The radio added that the Committee also agreed to grant \$175 million as economic aid

for the same period. The American Congress is expected to vote on the Committee's decision.

Meanwhile, a delegation from the Pentagon arrived in Tel Aviv on March 17th, to examine with Zionist officials the details of granting \$1500 million military aid and \$700 economic aid to the Zionist entity allocated for the year 1976.

Zionist troops Open Fire on Demonstrators

A Zionist army spokesman confessed that Zionist soldiers had opened fire on demonstrators, as a result three young Arabs were wounded, the United Press reported.

The Associated Press also said that Zionist forces while shooting Arab citizens in the occupied West Bank, detained tens of them to impose curfew.

Foreign correspondents were ordered to leave Occupied Palestine so that they could not reveal the massacres perpetrated by the Zionists against armless Arab demonstrators.

Reports from occupied Palestine affirm that Zionist troops killed an eleven-year boy on purpose. Zionist military sources said that the boy was blocking the passage of a military armoured car!



Terrorist Zionists arrest Arabs at random

Presidents of Ruanda, Yugoslavia, Mexico Support Arabs and Condemn Zionists

President Habia Remana, in a statement issued on March 14th, at Kharoum Airport, announced Ruanda Republic's full support to the Arab rights in general and the Palestinians' in particular. He also called for the full restoration of the occupied Arab territories and stressed his condemnation of Zionist aggression against the defenceless Arabs and the continued occupation of their land.

On the other hand, President Tito of Yugoslavia and Echeverria of Mexico stressed in a joint communique published on March 14th, following the conclusion of the Yugoslav President's visit to Mexico, the need for an immediate withdrawal of the Zionist forces from all occupied Arab territories, and the recognition of the lawful rights of the Palestinian Arabs.



Spring Festivals In Iraq



Folk dancing in reception to spring

by: Majed al-Najjar

Public festivals known by the peoples and nations of the world are a means of recreation and refreshment or they are held to pay tributes to national and historical events. As a people with a very long history, the Iraqis have a place in this respect. Many public festivals are held throughout the year, some of which are the Spring Festivals.

In Iraq, history tells us that the ancient Babylonians were paying high tribute to spring festivals. It is to them the symbol of conflict between forces of nature which ends in the triumph of life and fertility over death. "On the sixth day of April, Nebu, the son of Marduk, used to enter the city of Babylon leading the annual procession through the Procession Street on to Ishtar Gate."

The other spring festival which the Iraqis celebrate is the "Nawruz" festival — the 21st, of

March — when the sun becomes vertical on the equator. During the Abbaside period, people used to spray water on each other, water to them is the symbol of good, fertility and bliss. They also used to exchange presents and gifts as signs for more friendship and good will. Mask parties were also popular at that time.

Sometime ago, the Baghdadis used to go on this day to the Tigris River where they wash their faces with its water — an act of asking bliss. Some used to distribute house-made sweets.

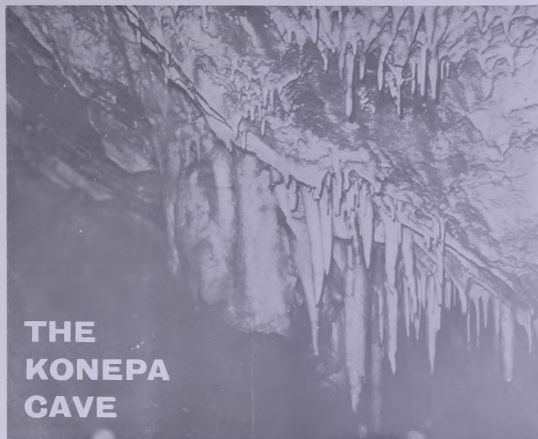
As did their forefathers, the Iraqis now regard spring as the time when everything in nature blossoms — spring is the time of ripeness and harvest. Nature is attired in its vivid and rich array. The green land is an omen of optimism and creation.

But in the present, Iraqis think that their ancestors were late in celebrating spring festi-

vals, so they set February as the start for spring festivals. Late in February, one town, Diala, has its Orange and Lemon Festival. February in Diala is the hayday of orange fruits.

On the 23rd of March, Iraq celebrates the Tree Festival. On this day Iraqis are called to plant as more trees as they can — to plant a tree is to bring a new life.

In Nineveh — north Iraq — the people there hold a three-day spring festival on the 10th of April. Historical motorcades — Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Arab, Kurdish and Turkoman processions — parade the city of Mosul. Pupils, university students, teachers, officials and the public join in this striking festival. Folk dancing and singing, recreation parties, art exhibitions are part of the festival. All along, everything throbs with life and joy.



THE KONEPA CAVE

by: F. el-Manssoury

The Splendours of Stalagmite and Stalactite Formations In an Iraqi Cave

There were ten explorers.

A few weeks ago, a resident of Derbendi Khan — which is a small town in the north of Iraq — overheard two villagers talking about a cave which they called Konepa — Kurdish for "air tunnel". Originally from the city of Mosul, this man — Salah Mirdan — had been living in Derbendi since the mid-fifties, and as the adopted son of this mountainous region, he had always taken a deep interest in its hauntingly beautiful landscape.

He now learned from the two men that they stored their game in this Cave, which they described as being vast and largely unexplored. Pricking his ears at the news, Mirdan decided to lead a hand picked band of mountaineers to this new cave. He collected seven men and two boys and the party set off on its journey of exploration across the mountains.

Arriving at its destination a couple of hours later, the party found that the entrance to the cave measured around sixty centimetres in diameter and that it was less than a metre in height. Mirdan also understood why the two villagers had



called the cave "Konepa". As he stood outside the entrance, he could plainly hear the sound of the whirling wind inside the cave. Since the entrance was rather narrow, there was nothing else to do but to crawl inside backwards, letting oneself be sucked by the wind into the sloping, three-metre long passage.

When the whole party had entered the cave, they found themselves in a very large place which was completely dark. The cave also seemed stiflingly hot in comparison with the bitterly cold winter weather outside. Armed with torchlights, kerosene lamps and candles, they started to explore the place.

At first there was some fear amongst the members of the party that the cave might harbour some dangerous animals like bears, wolves or leopards — all being species which abound in the mountainous north — but with the exception of a large black snake which swiftly disappeared into the darkness, there was no trace of any beast, living or dead.

As the party advanced inside the cave, the way became increasingly rugged and the ten explorers had to climb one large boulder after another. They followed a sloping course which appeared to lead to the very hollow of the mountain. Then their light beams fell on the stalactite and stalagmite formations and Mirdan gasped as he realized that this was not just another cave.

As the party was ill-equipped to undertake a full journey of exploration that would take it to the very end of the cave, it turned back and Mirdan hastened to inform the authorities about Iraq's first stalagmite — stalactite cave. The Ministry of Information was quick to take action and several parties of newsmen were dispatched to Konepa.

It proved to be quite a journey.

A Hemingway-like Feeling

There was no road leading to the cave; consequently our Party had to be transported on mules. Mules are magnificent creatures in the mountains, but even they can stumble and fall when the terrain is exceptionally rugged. The cave is situated on the steep side of the Gulam mountain, and, short of a helicopter, the traveller has to cross several ravines and valleys — not to mention a fordable river — before reaching his destination. The scenery is breathtakingly beautiful, but when one is clinging precariously to the back of a mule which is progressing along a path that is only a metre wide, with the edge of a gaping abyss a mere few centimetres away, one's appreciation of natural beauty tends to be less marked. Finally, I decided that climbing the

mountain on foot was the better part of valour, even if it proved to be infinitely more exhausting than being astride a mule.

I was encouraged into taking this decision by the example of our accompanying photographer, weighing a mere 42 kilograms and carrying equipment that weighed around ten kilograms, he had insisted on going on foot so as to be better able to carry out his work.

So I continued on foot. Pausing now and then to take a breath I would look around me to inspect the scenery. I could now understand why Mirdan had chosen to spend his life in this region. Only the day before, he had told me that it felt good to rise every morning and look at the mountains, and the lake that nestled in their midst. It was a Hemingway-like sensation which was not out of place in such a region.

After an exhausting two-hour trip, we stood before the mouth of the cave. If I had been living in an earlier age, the sound of the whirling wind inside the cave would have seemed to me like the muttering of some weird deity — a dragon perhaps. It sounded sinister and forbidding. But we managed to overcome our apprehension, and like veteran spelunkers, we let ourselves slide in. We found ourselves in pitch darkness, so we lit our lamps and looked around us. We were in a large hall-like place with a high ceiling. After a few minutes rest, we proceeded into the depths of the cave. Moving inside the cave, as it turned out, was more than we bargained for. Climbing one huge boulder after another, we cut our hands on their razor-sharp edges; we stumbled and fell; our feet were caught between the rocks and our clothes were torn into shreds. All the time we were progressing downwards — then suddenly geological formations began to appear on the walls of the cave. After a few metres, we reached a circular place which we dubbed the candles room. Here, the stalagmites and stalactites appeared in all their magnificent glory. We were in a weirdly beautiful world of a thousand and one shapes.

We lit the candles and placed them on portuberances, and as their flames flickered, we saw that the geological formations possessed a multitude of colours and hues. They had the most fantastic shapes; nature had gone wild in creating the sort of sculpture that combined all styles and all schools of the plastic arts.

Since a writer has to brush up all kinds of clichés in order to describe the world of a stalagmite-stalactite cave, let it suffice here to say that this cave, the only one of its kind hitherto discovered in Iraq, possesses all the potentials that would make it a first-rate tourist attraction.

Cable cars can be installed to carry the tourist across the valleys and the hills to the very mouth of the cave. Inside the cave, the tourists can be transported in carriages moving on railway tracks.

Concerts can also be held inside. The German avant-garde composer, Stockhausen, is invited every year to give a recital in the famous Jeita cave in Lebanon. But I personally would opt for Johann Sebastian Bach any time. Just imagine St. Mathew's Passion being given in the Konepa cave. Is there any cathedral in the world to beat a stalagmite cave as a setting for Bach's music?

Acknowledgements

The writer would like to express his deepest thanks to the Derbendi Khan section of the Arab Baath Socialist Party for facilitating his mission. Due thanks also go to the commander of the Derbendi garrison for his kind help in providing transportation and clothing.

Some pertinent Scientific Information

"Stalactite: (From the greek stalaktos: trickling or dropping) an icicle-shaped deposit of carbonate of lime hanging from the roof or sides of a cave formed by the evaporation of dripping water having a high lime content.

"Stalagmite: a cone-shaped deposit of carbonate of lime extending vertically from the floor of a cave, after forming beneath, and becoming continuous with, a stalactite above. The scientific term for cave explorers is speleologists, but they are popularly called spelunkers.

There are many limestone caves in the world. Among the most famous are:

1. The Jeita cave in Lebanon.
2. The Luray cavern in Virginia, USA
3. The Postumia cave in Italy.
4. The Causses District in France.
5. The Grottoes in Belgium.
6. The Jenolan cave in Australia.

It is a well-known fact that Islamic architecture shows the influence of geological formation. This is specially evident in Moorish mosques and palaces.



The Sun Slain in Qonaytera — oil



Old Baghdadi Quarter — oil

by: Hussein Fawzi

At the end of last month, Bagdad witnessed the Annual Exhibition of the Iraqi Artists Society. Works presented were a reflection of all aspects of Iraqi life, political and social. Yet, methods of artistic representation differed. 62 painters participated in the exhibition. The total of paintings was 92, in addition to 14 sculptures made by 11 sculptors.

Among those who visited the Exhibition, were some who haven't seen any previous works of the society, yet they expressed their admiration for the high artistic standard. The visitors-book at the exhibition also included remarks denoting how many visitors were realizing the real dimensions of the fame of Iraqi artistic work. On the other side, critics in Iraqi papers and magazines criticized some of the participants for their tendency of repetition, without attempts to innovation.

Critics also referred to the tendency of some painters for introversion and total devotion of their gifts to picturing "samples of nature", as is the case with the painteress Sawwan Salman in her work "The Village", and Mohammed Mostaffa Kamal in his work "Babul-Sif Quarter".

Yet, regardless of those remarks, the objective spectator could feel the deep commitment to the social and political questions which the Iraqi society and the Arab nation faced and is still facing.

As for the factor of creating and assembling the elements which make an artistic work, we can say that they were practised in modern artistic methods and were underlined with Iraqi Artistic heritage, all this done

The Annual Exhibition of the Iraqi Artists Society

without neglecting the commitment to the question of the country and people.

Mr. Nazar Hindawi, an artist known for his modern realism as well as impressionism, especially his tendency to paint horses, introduced the painting of "The Sun Slain on the Land of Qonaytera".

for representing the notion he wanted to express other than that style.

Mr. Sabeeh Kalash is another artist who represented "The Saviour".

The painting tends towards symbolism.

It includes a popular legend



The Uprising — oil

The painting tends to be surrealistic, where the painter deliberately put the colours into blocks, and he utmostly exploited the contrast displayed by white and black which made the brilliant sun in the painting a focus depicting man murdered by the Zionists in Qonaytera.

The painting of Mr. Hindawi was actually considered by some critics as an uncommitted art done for arts sake.

Yet the artist, in reply, said that, he didn't find a better style

promising the appearance of a saviour who would purge earth from corruption.

The painting was criticized only for the fact that the painter brought together a symbolic figure and non-symbolic one.

"Uprising" is another painting by Abdul Saheb al-Rekabi. Pale yellow is scattered all over the painting and the background is also greyish mixed with yellow. A procession in fetters, besides which a dance of joy,

flowers and a dove shining with hope.

The painting actually reminds the Iraqi citizen of death and challenge which the masses lived during the late forties when an uprising took place against the Portsmouth Treaty of 1948, and against the Iraqi government's treacherous stand towards the British-French-Zionist aggression, on Egypt 1956.

Besides modern schools dealing with social and political questions, there were less artistically sophisticated, paintings, still these could treat fundamental issues without spoiling their aesthetic dimensions.

Painter Nazim al-Jabouri was one of the best in this field. He introduced: "People Guard the Nationalisation" and "I am coming back to you" (Palestine). So, for the purpose of communicating his idea to the largest possible number, he chose modern realism together with an attempt to keep away from any technical complication. This actually helped to give a direct effect of the content of the two paintings. It also enabled the spectator to feel the aesthetic touches of the woman's face in "I am coming back to you" as the woman represents Palestine, and the black colour in itself suggests a challenge.

The tendency towards impressionism was apparently left among the works presented. "Old Baghdad" with its traditional windows was portrayed in many paintings, with some deep colouring. Seven women also participated in the exhibition. Sawwan Salman portrayed "Fear" by means of assembling colours. Afifa Lu'abi contributed with "Woman's Year" and used many mottos to express her purpose.

Pride and Fury

by Mahmud Darwish

O homeland! O eagle,
Plunging, through the bars of my cell,
Your fiery beak in my eyes!
All I possess in the presence of death
Is pride and fury.
I have willed that my heart be planted as a
tree.
That my forehead become an abode for
skylarks.
O eagle,
I am unworthy of your lofty wing,
O prefer a crown of flame.
O homeland!
We were born and raised in your wound,
And ate the fruit of your trees,
To witness the birth of your daybreak.
O eagle unjustly languishing in chains,
O legendary death which once was sought,
Your fiery beak is still plunged in my eye,
Like a sword of flame.
Unworthy of your lofty wing.
All I possess in the presence of death
Is pride and fury.

NEW DISCOVERIES OF SUMERIAN CIVILIZATION

Excavations in Iraq, done by a British Archaeological Expedition in Abu-Salabikh under the direction of Mr. Nicholas Postgate, uncovered the remains of a temple that goes back to the early Sumerian Civilization inside which there was a grave of woman who might have been a priestess.

The site contains the remains of a Sumerian city of the early Dynastic Period (about 3000-2400 BC), and was excavated first in 1960, 500 clay tablets were found inscribed in archaic cuneiform with wise sayings given by the mythical Shurppak to his son.

In the grave a skeleton was found, though in poor condition, but with a necklace of beads that suggests it was of a woman.

The grave was also furnished with a fine stone dish and a pestle and mortar.

There remains many questions regarding these discoveries according to Archaeological correspondents but they say that future excavation of a complex of well-built rooms on the other high point of the site to the North may give some clue to the nature of sacred and secular public architecture in this Sumerian city.

AL-JUMHURIYAH (Iraq)

Commenting on the provocative and slanderous campaign being launched by the Dutch government against Iraq for executing the Zionist Dutch spy, Alexander Haroun (original name, Lindert Arnsjon) who immigrated to occupied Palestine and was arrested in the north of Iraq where he worked with the traitorous clique of Mulla Mustafa Barzani as an agent of Zionist intelligence, the Iraqi daily Al-Jumhuriyah wrote "the participation by the Dutch Prime Minister and his Foreign Minister in the anti-Iraq campaign constitutes insolent act which expresses the inveterate imperialist hatred by Dutch officials against the revolutionary Iraq". The paper described the action as "portraying the close relationship between the Hague and Tel Aviv on the one hand and between the Dutch government and the racial Zionist movement in the world in general on the other. It is also closely associated with Iraq's nationalisation of Dutch oil interests in the country".

ATH-TAWRA (Iraq)

The Iraqi daily Ath-Thawra, organ of the Arab Baath Socialist Party, in a commentary on the 39th meeting of Liaison Officers of Regional Bureaux for Boycott of "Israel" scheduled for Alexandria on 24 this month, called for the necessity of "tightening the Arab boycott against the Zionist enemy and putting an end to any breaches of the boycott". The paper added: "The boycott is an instrument of struggle singled out by Arab masses in Palestine prior to 1948. Its significance is laying out the Arab revolution's diagnosis of the nature of our imperialist-Zionist enemy. The conferees will find themselves face to face before the American challenges; as the United States will spare no effort to foil any measures aiming at strengthening or perpetuating the boycott".

POLITIK (Federal Germany)

Federal German "New Politik" magazine, issue entitled "Jews in the Arab States" took a remarkable initiative in inviting Jews who left Iraq since 1948 [Iraqi Nov., 1975] to return home and enjoy

equal rights and privileges together with their fellow countrymen. This RCC decision is a decisive evidence that Iraqis, and the Arabs, bear neither grudge nor rancour against the Jews".

POELBO (Spain)

The Spanish evening daily "Poelbo", in an article entitled "Development in Iraq", wrote:

"The Iraqis are working hand in hand with those who are good friends. During the coming five years, Iraq plans to achieve a high leap in national industrialisation, perhaps exceeding the anticipated targets. All productive sectors are functioning incessantly and Iraqi planners intend to establish within a short time expanded network of transportation means to ease mobility of goods and men".

TASVIR (Turkey)

In a series of articles on the industrial progress achieved by Iraq following the inception of the 17th July Revolution, the Turkish daily "Tasvir" wrote: "The government in Iraq is well aware of the significance of industrial progress. For this reason it embarked upon implementation of nation-wide projects.

The government devotes special and extensive attention to agricultural development, a matter which has had its effect on the emigrant farmers who began to return to their villages".

ÇOMHURİYET GAZETESİ (Turkey)

The Turkish paper Çomhuriyet commented on the collapse of Mulla Mustafa Barzani and the dramatic victory achieved by the Iraqi armed forces over his agent clique said: Barzani's rebellion collapsed easily because he allied himself with the Zionists and the CIA, both are the enemies of the Iraqi people whether Kurds or Arabs. He (Barzani) mutinied against the progressive popular Iraqi regime, thus his reactionary move had to face its destined end".

NEWS IN BRIEF

PRESIDENT BAKR RECEIVES MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT RUBAYA ALI

Foreign Minister, Mr. Mohammed Saleh Mutte'e, of the Yemen Democratic Republic paid a few days visit to Iraq starting from March 26.

While here, Mr. Mutte'e handed messages to President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr and RCC Vice-Chairman, Mr. Saddam Hussein from Democratic Yemen President, Saleh Rubaya Ali. The messages deal with current Arab and international issues.

IRAQI COMMUNIST PARTY MARKS 42nd ANNIVERSARY

The Iraqi Communist Party marked, on March 26, the 42nd anniversary of its foundation in a rally it held in Baghdad.

Comrade Shibly al-Aysami, Assistant Secretary General of the Arab Baath Socialist Party, and Comrade Saddam Hussein, Deputy Secretary of the ABSP's Regional Leadership, RCC Vice-Chairman and a number of ABSP's members of the National and Regional leaderships attended the rally and congratulated comrade Aziz Mohammed, ICP First Secretary and the other comrades of the party.

HAYDER RECEIVES FRENCH PARLIAMENTARIAN

Dr. Zaid Hayder, member of the National Leadership of the Arab Baath Socialist Party, conferred on March 22 with M. Jean Pierre Chevenement, member of French Socialist Party Politburo and Parliament member. During the audience, issues related to Arab and Palestinian causes and the stand of Western Europe's socialist parties towards such were the centre of their talks.

M. Chevenement's one-week visit to Iraq was at the invitation of the ABSP's National Leadership.

SOMALI MILITARY DELEGATION VISITS BAGHDAD

A Somali military delegation led by Brigadier General Abdullah Fadhill, member of the Supreme Revolutionary Council and Chief of Staff of the Somali National Army arrived in Baghdad on March 20 on an official visit to Iraq which lasted five days at the invitation of the Chief of Staff of Iraqi armed forces.

The aim of Mr. Fadhill's visit was to "strengthen the close ties between the two sisterly countries in various fields".

OIL MINISTER OPENS IRAQI GEOLOGISTS CONFERENCE

Iraqi oil minister, Mr. Tayeb Abdul Karim, opened on March 15, the 4th National Conference of Iraqi geologists.

The 4-day conference discussed topics related to geology in general, mineral and petroleum resources, geological profession and planning and development. The conference was attended by a number of Arab and foreign geologists.

INFORMATION MINISTER RECEIVES WOJ SECRETARY GENERAL

Information Minister, Mr. Tareq Aziz, received on March 20 Mr. Jiri Kubka, Secretary General of World Organisation of Journalists, who paid a few days visit to Iraq.

During the audience the Iraqi Minister reaffirmed Iraq's support and backing to democratic journalists in the world and to their struggle against imperialism. Mr. Aziz assured the visiting journalist that the Ministry of Information and the Iraqi Journalists Union are "in full support of the World Organisation of Journalists and its 8th Congress to be opened in Helsinki on August 20 next".

ARAB PHYSICISTS AND MATHEMATICIANS CONCLUDE CONFERENCE IN BAGHDAD

The institutional conference of the Arab Federation of Physicists and Mathematicians opened in Baghdad early last week and concluded its meetings with a number of resolutions and recommendations, including improving the standard of physics and mathematics in the Arab homeland. The conference was attended by representatives from Egypt, Libya, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Democratic Yemen, Lebanon, Sudan, Qatar, Kuwait, Palestine and Iraq.

IRAQ DONATES 1 M. DOLLAR WORTH OF OIL TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

Iraq has donated one-million dollar worth of crude oil to the Republic of Mozambique. This was announced by the Vice-President of Iraq, Mr. Taha Muhiyuddin Ma'ruf, in the course of a speech he delivered at a banquet given in his honour by Mr. Marcellino dos Santos, Vice-President of Mozambique, when he was in visit to this African state.

SPORT NEWS

IRAQI-TUNISIAN SPORTS WEEK

The Iraqi-Tunisian Sports Week started on March 19th, in Tunisia, the Iraqi News Agency announced.

The first sports meeting was held on March 17th, as the Iraqi wrestlers met the Tunisians to play a friendly match.

On the other hand, the Iraqi juvenile football Team which is having its first match abroad, played a friendly match with the Tunisian Juveniles in Sousse.

INA added that the Iraqi delegation was received by the Tunisian Minister of Youth.

Mr. Hammadi al-Khuwaini, Director of Youth Department in Tunisia, also announced that the friendly games between Iraq and Tunisia will help strengthen the brotherhood which binds the two countries together.

IRANIAN WRESTLERS ARRIVE IN IRAQ

Iran's Juvenile Wrestling Team arrived in Iraq on March 15th, to hold four friendly meetings with the Iraqi Teams.

The visitors' team consists of 13 members and four administrators.

Mr. Ebrahim Taha, Secretary General of the Iraqi Wrestling Federation (IWF), said that the Iranians have held their first bouts against Kerbala Juveniles on March 17th, at Kerbala.

He also announced that the visitors held three other bouts in Meysan, Basrah and Baghdad.

IRAQI STUDENTS GAMES

The preliminaries for the Iraqi Students Games for men commenced on March 17th throughout the country, announced Mr. Salim al-Jassar, Director General of Physical Training.

The Games held in four areas included football, basketball, volleyball, table-tennis and track and field.

BOXING CHAMPIONSHIP

In Commemoration of 11th March Festivals, al-Zawra Club held a Boxing Championship on March 11th.

Four teams took part in the Championship as a warm-up for al-Zawra's encounter with Taj Club of Iran which will be held in Teheran on April.

It is to be recalled that al-Zawra boxers beat Taj 9-3 in their last encounter held in Baghdad two months ago.

IRAQI GIRL STUDENTS GAMES

The 8th Iraqi Girl Students Games opened on March 11th, under the patronage of Mr. Radhi Hassan Salman, Governor of Qadisiya.

Baghdad Schools beat Wasit Schools 62-3 in the opening match of the Basketball Championship, Qadisiya schools in the second match of the day beat Suleimaniya 43-12.



IRAQ AND IRAN IN SAME GROUP OF ASIAN FINALS

Iraq and Iran were drawn together in Group I of the final rounds of the Asian Football Cup which will be held in Teheran next June.

Other teams of the group are Thailand and Yemen Democratic Republic.

In Group II, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Malaysia and Korean Democratic Republic were drawn together on March 11th, in Teheran.



IOC HOLDS MEETING

The Iraqi National Olympic Committee held an ordinary meeting on March 13th, at al-Karkh Club.

Members of the Iraqi Sports Federation attended the meeting to discuss the ways of promoting sports events in Iraq.

